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NEWS LETTER

PUBLISHED IN CONNECTION WITH THE
LINCOLN ESSAY CONTEST
HELD ANNUALLY IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS
THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

Springfield, Illinois, December 1, 1925

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Human-interest stories about Lincoln always are in demand at the time of his birthday. We have assembled the following to meet this demand. They have been taken from the authorities on Lincoln's life and condensed to meet the requirements of brevity. Your local newspapers undoubtedly will appreciate this little collection to which they are welcome with your and our compliments.

THE ILLINOIS WATCH COMPANY
Springfield, Illinois

The Home of Lincoln

Last February, in the far away little Chinese settlement of Wusang, the boys and girls of Boone college, a Christian missionary institution of learning, studied their Lincoln and wrote their essays in competition for our Lincoln contest medallion. The prize was awarded to Arnold Wang. We have received a copy of his essay in Chinese, accompanied by a translation in English, also written by this young man. It is almost sublime in its conception of the Lincoln character. He has put his thoughts into terms which translate into beautiful English.

It has occurred to us that the high schools that participated in this contest for our medal would be interested to know what a Chinese high school boy thinks about Lincoln; what he knows about American history and what is his ability to express it all.

Following is Arnold Wang's essay. We commend it to the high schools of the United States for the beauty of its thought and expression.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"All who have blood and breath unfeignedly honor and love him; hence it is said, 'He is the equal of Heaven'"

The Doctrine of the Mean.

Among the greatest figures in the modern age, none surpasses Abraham Lincoln in brilliance and sublimity. Without doubt he was one of the most celebrated statesmen our world has ever produced; and it goes without saying that he is the pride, the most precious national asset of the American people.

But Lincoln was more than a statesman of world-wide distinction, and much more still than one of the greatest executives of

America. He is "the equal of Heaven."

In 1619 the first score of negro slaves brought by the Dutch upon the Virginian soil soon began to infest the land of the pure and free. One hundred and seventy years later the Declaration of Independence achieved the "unalienable rights" for the people in the "sweet land of liberty"; but the principles set forth by the Declaration were polluted by the thousands of negro "property"; and its humane tone was drowned by the pathetic groan of oppression and bitterness of the great mass of "blackbirds."

Many Chinese readers of American history, when coming to the section about the institution of slavery, and seeing its being protected by the constitution, favored by legislation, and fought for desperately by the South, will seldom fail to doubt whether "such a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," was not like a Pharisaic follower, who outwardly hailed the cry, "Freedom! Equality!" "Give me liberty or death!" but inwardly had an oppressive and relentless heart. Such historical facts delude and justify us to think that the American idea of liberty meant the liberty for themselves, and not for others; the sacred principles of human liberty could be violated for racial and color differences; it was not "that all men are created equal," but only the favorite sons under the Stars and Stripes "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

But we are not inwrapped by such doubts for long. Out from the West from that little Kentuckian hut, came the "man of God," incarnated with the true spirit and real ideals of the majority of the Americans. He declared with an authoritative tone "that all persons held as slaves.....are and henceforth shall be free." With mighty hands he took off the yoke of slavery from the thousands of negroes and smote it into pieces. He made the "new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" to endure and to testify the principles of mankind. He was the saviour of the thousands of slaves; the great champion of the oppressed and the weak. For such saintly and heroic feats his life was finally offered upon the altar of humanity, freedom, and democracy. How overflowing was his love which passed the boundaries of color and race! His heart is the true American heart, the heart of humanity. That eminent British statesman, Mr. Lloyd George, in his tribute to Lincoln, said that he belongs to the common people of every land; and

truly, worthily he does.

After the establishment of the Federal Government the economical struggle between the manufacturing North and the agricultural South threatened the harmonious union of the nation. This struggle, culminated by the problem of slavery, was a menace to the stability of the Union, and a great obstacle to the national development. The fate of American freedom trembled in the balance. The constitutional rights vested in the government were ignored by the slave-holding states. "The house was divided," and it would cease to stand, had not the unwavering hands of Lincoln rebuilt it on a safe foundation. It was Lincoln who caused the political, moral, and economic reconstruction of the nation; and for the cause of his country he sacrificed his life; which is the highest form of patriotism.

Lincoln was a true patriot, whose name will be perpetuated in the haunt of human memory for generations to come.

Lincoln was a self-made man. He pushed to the front from the step of a rail-splitter. "Thus, when Heaven is about to confer a great office on any man, it first exercises his mind with suffering, and his sinews and bones with toil. It exposes his body to hunger, and subjects him to extreme poverty. It confounds his undertakings." By all these methods it stimulates his mind, hardens his nature, and supplies his incompetencies." His perseverance; his devotion to study; his keen sense of right or wrong; his courage, both moral and physical; his clemency; his fortitude; and his trust in God will serve as the best model and stimulating encouragement to the ambitious youths of the West as well as the East, who wish to exert themselves in high ideals even under adverse circumstances.

But above all, his honesty, "complete honesty," wins admiration and honor from every human lip. How many can be honest in dollars and cents: honest in time of agony and distress: honest under threat and despair? Lincoln was honest through and through, his whole being, if being analyzed, was composed of nothing but the elements of honesty. The title "Honest Abe" is a synonym for perfect honesty. Mencius said that it is only he who is possessed of the most complete honesty who can move others. Lincoln moved the slave-holders to emancipate their abominable possession. He moved the American people to uphold the high ideals and lofty principles of mankind. He moved the false to become honest. He moved the coward to be brave. According to the meaning conveyed by the doctrine of the mean about the com-

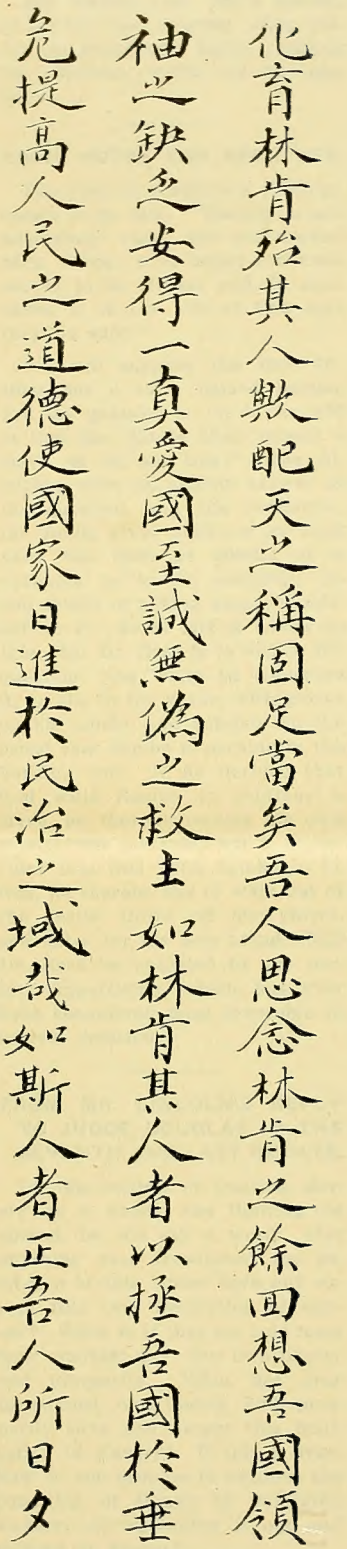
plete honesty, Lincoln is such a man who can assist the transforming and the nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. "Hence it is said—'He is the equal of Heaven.' "

In concluding the thoughts on Lincoln, we cannot but naturally reflect on the urgent need of leadership of our country. China needs a saviour, a champion of the oppressed and the weak, a true patriot, and above all, a man of complete honesty.

In one word, China wants a Chinese Lincoln who can steer her ship of state out of the turbulent sea, and who can uplift the nation to a high moral and democratic basis. May that "man of God," "the equal of Heaven," come upon our land!

NOTE—The term "equal of Heaven" carries a meaning rather akin to the Jewish idea of the priesthood or more the idea of a chosen prophet, an excellent example would be the Jewish estimate of David. Here Mr. Wang sees Lincoln in his true Christian relationship, one who places himself in harmony with God and is, in this way, His prophet.

The following is a part of Mr. Wang's essay written in Chinese.



FROM NOTES FOR LAW LECTURE.

The leading rule for a lawyer, as for the man of every other calling, is diligence. Leave nothing for tomorrow which can be done today.

FROM NOTES FOR SPEECHES.

The sum of pro-slavery theology seems to be this: "Slavery is not universally right, nor yet universally wrong; it is better for some people to be slaves; and, in such cases, it is the will of God that they be such."

We will suppose the Rev. Dr. Ross has a slave named Sambo, and the question is, "Is it the will of God that Sambo shall remain a slave, or be set free?" The Almighty gives no audible answer to the question, and His revelation, the Bible, gives none—or at most none but such as admits of a squabble as to its meaning; no one thinks of asking Sambo's opinion on it. So at last it comes to this, that Dr. Ross is to decide the question; and while he considers it, he sits in the shade, with gloves on his hands, and subsists on the bread that Sambo is earning in the burning sun. If he decides that God wills Sambo to continue a slave, he thereby retains his own comfortable position; but if he decides that God wills Sambo to be free, he thereby has to walk out of the shade, throw off his gloves, and delve for his own bread. Will Dr. Ross be actuated by the perfect impartiality which has ever been considered most favorable to correct decisions?

FROM MR. LINCOLN'S REPLY TO JUDGE DOUGLAS IN THE SEVENTH AND LAST DEBATE.

On this subject of treating slavery as a wrong and limiting its spread, let me say a word. Has anything ever threatened the existence of this Union save and except this very institution of slavery? What is it that we hold most dear amongst us? Our own liberty and prosperity. What has ever threatened our liberty and prosperity save and except this institution of slavery? If this is true, how do you propose to improve the condition of things by enlarging slavery,—by spreading it out and making it bigger?

FROM A LETTER TO J. W. FELL.

If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion with coarse black hair and gray

eyes. No other marks or brands recollected.

LETTER TO MISS GRACE BEDELL.

My dear little Miss.—Your very agreeable letter of the 15th is received. I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughter. I have three sons—one seventeen, one nine, and one seven years of age. They, with their mother, constitute my whole family. As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affectation if I were to begin it now?

FROM FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a President under our National Constitution. During that period fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens have, in succession, administered the executive branch of the government. They have conducted it through many perils, and generally with great success. Yet, with all this scope of precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

FROM A LETTER TO HORACE GREELEY.

If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them.

If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them.

My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and not either to save or to destroy slavery.

If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that.

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FROM NOTE TO SECRETARY STANTON.

Dear Sir.—I personally wish Jacob Freese, of New Jersey, to be appointed Colonel of a colored regiment, and this regardless of whether he can tell the exact shade of Julius Caesar's hair.

FROM LETTER TO SECRETARY STANTON.

My dear Sir.—A poor widow, by the name of Baird, has a son in the army, that for some offence has been sentenced to serve a long time without pay, or at most with very little pay. I do not like this punishment of withholding pay—it falls so very hard upon poor families. After he had been serving in this way for several months, at the tearful appeal of the poor mother, I made a direction that he be allowed to enlist for a new term, on the same condition as others. She now comes, and says she cannot get it acted upon. Please do it.

A LETTER TO MRS. BIXLEY, OF BOSTON.

Dear Madam. — I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and
respectfully,

Abraham Lincoln.

A LETTER TO THURLOW WEED.

Dear Mr. Weed.—Every one likes a compliment. Thank you for yours on my little notification speech and on the recent inaugural address. I expect the latter to wear as well as—perhaps better than—anything I have produced: but I believe it is not immediately popular.

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